

D. G. Yanchenko, V. A. Shorokhov

THE CAUCASIAN POLICY OF THE IMPERIAL BRANCHES OF POWER DURING THE FIRST RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

The paper examines the main policies of the imperial government, the czar's *namestnik* (lord viceroy) and the State Duma concerning the Caucasus question between 1905 and 1907. All the measures to combat regional nationalism and terrorism are investigated amid the general policy of de-escalation of tensions and the remedial actions taken in the wake of revolutionary turmoil. The authors investigate the course by the *namestnik* H. I. Vorontsov-Dashkov who put together all possible reforms and security measures to good advantage. The *namestnik*'s independent policy led to multiple conflicts with bureaucrats as well as with the State Duma. A personal factor is also worth taking into account — H. I. Vorontsov-Dashkov had awkward dealings with some members of the government, especially P. A. Stolypin. The authors conclude that local elites of the region tried to gain maximum concessions from the government in the shortest time possible through demonstrating explicit support of revolutionary circles. At the same time, the imperial administration's overriding demand for the restoration to minimally safe conditions was more or less ignored. Having chosen the language of slogans and massive pressure on the Tsarist administration, the Caucasian deputies of the State Duma abrogated the possibility of satisfying their voters' expectations and fulfilled the roles of background players in settling regional conflicts. In conclusion, the viceroyalty was the most effective institution in the revolutionary context though it remained a provisional and emergency structure. Only H. I. Vorontsov-Dashkov had enough prerogative and subtle understanding of the situation and, finally, it was he as *namestnik* who took it upon himself to introduce real measures to settle national differences in the region and to advocate for the rights of the Caucasian communities in the face of the Centre. Refs 54.

Keywords: The Russian Revolution of 1905–1907, the Caucasus, the viceroyalty, the State Duma, nationalisms, the imperial governance.

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Д. Г. Янченко, В. А. Шорохов

КАВКАЗСКАЯ ПОЛИТИКА ИМПЕРСКИХ ВЛАСТЕЙ
В ПЕРИОД ПЕРВОЙ РУССКОЙ РЕВОЛЮЦИИ

В статье проанализированы основные направления деятельности центрального правительства, наместника и зарождающихся представительских учреждений Российской империи в отношении Кавказа в 1905–1907 гг. Меры по борьбе с региональным национализмом и терроризмом рассматриваются в контексте общей политики снижения напряженности и преодоления

Yanchenko Denis Gennadevich. — PhD, Associate Professor, St. Petersburg State University, 7–9, Universitetskaya nab., St. Petersburg, 199034, Russian Federation; d.yanchenko@spbu.ru

Shorokhov Vladimir Andreevich — PhD, Assistant, St. Petersburg State University, 7–9, Universitetskaya nab., 199034, Russian Federation, St. Petersburg, 199034, Universitetskaya nab., 7–9; v.shorohov@spbu.ru

Янченко Денис Геннадьевич — кандидат исторических наук, доцент, Санкт-Петербургский государственный университет, Российская Федерация, 199034, Санкт-Петербург, Университетская наб., 7–9; d.yanchenko@spbu.ru

Шорохов Владимир Андреевич — кандидат исторических наук, ассистент, Санкт-Петербургский государственный университет, Российская Федерация, 199034, Санкт-Петербург, Университетская наб., 7–9; v.shorohov@spbu.ru

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последствий революционных потрясений. Достаточно успешная программа «умиротворения» Кавказа с помощью административно-политических реформ была связана с именем И. И. Воронцова-Дашкова. Однако самостоятельная политика наместника привела к конфликту как с петербургской бюрократией, так и с Государственной думой, что затруднило проведение преобразований, призванных решить вопросы, поставленные первой русской революцией. При этом стоит учитывать и личностный фактор — непростые отношения И. И. Воронцова-Дашкова с представителями правительства, в особенности с П. А. Столыпиным. Авторы исследования показывают, как политические представители грузин, армян и азербайджанцев в Первой и Второй думах пытались в кратчайший срок добиться максимальных уступок со стороны власти путем открытой поддержки революционных кругов. Революционная оппозиция обладала достаточно развернутыми и радикальными (по меркам инертного руководства империи) программами реформ. Запрос имперских структур на приоритетное восстановление минимально безопасных условий функционирования при этом игнорировался. Выбрав язык лозунгов и массированного давления на царскую бюрократию, народные избранники исключили возможность сотрудничества и не смогли помочь своим избирателям. Они добровольно отвели себе роль статистов в урегулировании региональных конфликтов, не в силах преодолеть совокупность локальных противоречий. Наиболее эффективными в условиях революции стали действия временной и чрезвычайной, но обремененной реальными полномочиями и тонким пониманием ситуации властной структуры — института наместничества. Однако в самой его сути были заложены ограничения, исключавшие возможность кардинального разрешения проблем, многие из которых до сих пор терзают Кавказ. Несмотря на это, И. И. Воронцов-Дашков не только выработал эффективные меры по снижению напряженности, но и отстоял сохранение кавказского представительства в российском парламенте. Библиогр. 54 назв.

Ключевые слова: революция в России 1905–1907 гг., Кавказское наместничество, Совет министров, Государственная дума, национализм, имперское управление.

During the first Russian revolution the system of governance of the Caucasus underwent fundamental changes. The paper examines major administrative and political activities of the central government and emerging representative offices of the Russian Empire in this region, in particular, the measures taken to confront local national movements in the context of a policy aimed at alleviating tension and overcoming the effects of revolutionary turmoil. In order to assess the effectiveness of new mechanisms of governance the authors analyze their application to the resolution of the first series of events in the Armenian–Azerbaijani conflict.

The study of the relationships between the authorities and society, the State Duma and administrative civil servants in terms of governance of the Caucasus is still of interest to scholars and the public. This is prompted by both the existence of ongoing armed conflicts and the “unfinished state” (a condition which seems to be everlasting), the heterogeneity and doubtful effectiveness of the contemporary models of governing the territories comprising the Caucasus Viceroyalty a century ago.

Not elaborating on the extensive historiography of the issue, some recent publications concerning the events of 1905–1907 in the Caucasus are worthy of note. First and foremost, one has to point out works in Russian: the papers by A. T. Urushadze, M. F. Florinsky, a monograph by E. A. Pravilova; general studies by D. I. Ismail-Zade; works by an Austrian researcher A. Kappeler; a thesis by A. S. Kondrasheva [Urushadze 2015a; Urushadze 2015b; Florinsky 2009; Pravilova 2006; Ismail-Zade 2005; Ismail-Zade 2008; Kappeler 2005; Kondrasheva 2003]. As far as historiography from Caucasus and Transcaucasia is concerned, it mainly deals with the “emerging revival” of the particular peoples of the re-

gion, which, as we see it, determines a dogmatic approach to the analysis of the activities of the representatives of central state offices and local communities in terms of “colonial” and “national-liberation” discourses [Ejubov 2010; Perinchek 2011; Gasanly 2013; Dzhabbarov 2016]. To a large extent, similar approaches are typical of research by “outside” scholars, though it should be noted that they tend to be less biased in studying imperial structures and practices [Hovannisian 1971; Sargent 2010]. On the whole, there have been few attempts to examine particular transformations in the imperial political system and instability in the Caucasus from 1905 to 1906, apart from research by M. A. Volhonskij, V. P. Pljaskin, N. T. Rahmanin [Volhonskij 2003; Pljaskin 2003; Volhonskij 2005; Pljaskin, Rahmanin 2013] and some general comments in different publications [Volhonskij, etc. 2013]. Anyway, some aspects of the issue still have remained unclear. For example, the Caucasus policy of Duma has been predominantly considered as applied to the third calling or to some particular deputies [Darchieva 2013]. Moreover, in our opinion, scholars have drawn insufficient emphasis to the role of the Russian parliament and its conflict with the imperial government in exacerbating the region’s turmoil. Thus we shall try to look at the known issue from a different perspective.

The sources used for the following research have been the holdings of the central state offices of the Russian Empire and executive offices of the *namestnik* (lord viceroy) of the Caucasus kept in the Russian State Historical Archive.

After the abolition of The Caucasus Viceroyalty in 1882, the administration of the executive office in the region was incorporated into the Ministerial system of the Empire. Its ineffectiveness was more or less compensated by the growth of the staff. Over the period 1882–1905 the number of civil servants in the region doubled [Gorodnizky 2004, p. 4]. The practice of governing from Saint Petersburg through the *glavnonachal'stvujushhij* (director), by and large, proved unsuccessful. The approach whereby “all matters related to the Caucasus are to be dealt with, as in inner governorates, through ministries” [Kondrasheva 2003, p. 206] was not there fully adopted. The *glavnonachal'stvujushhij* generally acted as a mediator between the local administration and the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

In revolutionary 1905 there was no other choice but to restore the Viceroyalty. The *namestnik* (viceroy) was granted emergency authorities. In due form his coordination with ministries was still preserved. However, the status of a new position was equal to that of the minister and presupposed a membership in the State Council. Moreover, a *namestnik* was given remit to resolve issues that had once been in the domain of the supreme power. For example, civil and military officials of the Caucasus were subordinated to him and could be appointed or dismissed by him. Under the decree of 3 March 1905, the *namestnik* became Commander-in-chief of the Military district of the Caucasus and the appointed hetman (ataman) of the Terek and Kuban Cossacks [Mezhdu centralizmom i regionalizmom..., pp. 182–184; Darchieva 2016].

This significant and responsible post was offered to an outstanding administrator Count Hillarion Ivanovich Vorontsov-Dashkov, who enjoyed the immense trust of the emperor. Over the decade (1905–1915) it was he who had been largely determining imperial policy in the Caucasus. In his report to the Emperor from 12 April 1905, H. I. Vorontsov-Dashkov outlined legislative framework of his duties (article 9–19, as well as 26, 27 of the Constitution of the branches in the Caucasus and Transcaucasia of 1876). He stressed that “all references necessary for the matters of the Caucasus and Transcaucasia, information, explanations etc. related to the aspects of governance are to be obtained

through no other means but the viceroy of the Caucasus" [O porjadke podchinennosti lichnogo sostava Kavkazskih sudebnyh ustanovlenij, l. 6 ob.].

In the environment of 1905, courts and law enforcement authorities turned out to pose the greatest challenge administration. They demonstrated impotence in struggling with threats to the regional security. This fact was pointed out by H. I. Vorontsov-Dashkov in his letter to Minister of Justice S. S. Manukhin from 3, September, 1905 (№ 200): "I have no right to conceal from Your High Excellency my overall unfavorable impression of the activities of judiciaries dealing with crimes against the state, an impression formed from applying the particular cases addressed to me personally. Most probably, the judicial bureaucrats are far from setting themselves the serious goal of assisting investigators as far as crimes against the state are concerned, but they are trying to find faults and errors in investigation which is always possible even in a less sensitive area [O snoshenijah s raznymi mestami i licami, ll. 1 ob.-2].

In the context of the revolutionary crisis it is possible to identify four different sets of measures taken by the viceroy to "pacify" the Caucasus. Foremost, the reforms were made aimed at raising the status of civil servants. Secondly, actions were taken to implement electoral legislation concerning the State Duma to the reality of the Caucasus reality and relationships were established between the central and local administration and the co-operative elements of the population. Third, the government enhanced security to resist revolutionary and national movements and to de-escalate the conflict between Armenians and Muslims of Transcaucasia. Finally, religious policy towards Christian Armenians and Georgians as well as Muslims of the Caucasus was corrected.

As early as in April, 1905, in his report to Nicolas II, Vorontsov-Dashkov suggested making the *namestnik's* status and rights equal to those of the ministers and chief executive officers over the civil servants in the Caucasus. What was meant was the right to dismiss, to appoint, to promote, to reward and to grant pensions. By the decrees from 26 February 1906 and 3 May 1906 the viceroy was vested with the authority of the minister over all civil servants in the Caucasus excluding those of the State Control, State Bank and law structures [O porjadke podchinennosti lichnogo sostava Kavkazskih sudebnyh ustanovlenij, ll. 1–2 ob.]. However, the role of the Ministry of Finance remained significant. It retained its key functions concerning "managing the economy and finances of the region, which were incorporated, at least de jure, into the financial system of the Empire" [Quote from: Ismailova 2016, p. 12]. According to A. M. Ismailova, "the government and the Ministry of Finance preeminently tried to prevent "privatization" of the resources of the provinces and to restore the hierarchy of connections by frequent inspections and by means of centralized resource management. Debates and "negotiations" concerning economic authorities often resulted in conflicts between regional administration and central financial institution" [Ismailova 2016, p. 12].

As far as judicial sphere is concerned, H. I. Vorontsov-Dashkov insisted on judiciaries remaining subordinated to the center. First of all, "transfer of authority of the Minister of Justice to do with appointments, promotions and other changes and benefits of the officials of this Ministry to the governor-general, i.e. supreme administrative power in the region, might arouse the suspicion of the lack of independence of local courts from the administration and undermine the local population's trust in the judiciary". Secondly, Vorontsov-Dashkov wrote to the executive officer of the Committee of ministers E. Y. Nolde that "the viceroy will never have the same wide range of candidates as the Minister of

Justice” [O porjadke podchinennosti lichnogo sostava Kavkazskih sudebnyh ustanovlenij, l. 3]. The latter was the authorized representative of the governor-general in Saint Petersburg and defended his interests in the state offices [Mezhdu centralizmom i regionalizmom..., pp. 185–86]. According to E. Y. Nolde, the viceroy’s suggestions met all the demands of the current imperial policy.

A special procedure of appointing civil servants in the Caucasus contradicted attempts at judicial unification in the Empire. Nolde as well as Vorontsov-Dashkov as experienced Saint Petersburg officials realized it wholeheartedly. Therefore, an imperial decree from 13, July, 1905 preserving this procedure and being enforced with regards to judiciary until the restoration of the viceroyalty, was approved by them.

Under the circumstances described above the influence of the Minister of Justice on the Caucasus policy considerably increased. Between 1906 and 1915 the Ministry of Justice in Russia was headed by I. G. Shcheglovitov. Having visited the region in 1910 he demanded that all representatives of local nationalities be discharged from employment in courts due to the “Russianization” policy. Some of the principal executives of the Ministry in the Caucasus lost their posts due to the failure to comply with his order.

It should be noted that Saint Petersburg was highly concerned with the religious identity of their “indigenous” colleagues. Inspecting subordinate institutions, I. G. Shcheglovitov constantly reminded that “moral principles of non-Christian beliefs are fundamentally contrary to Christian ethics” [Shavlokhova 2014, p. 88]. This approach contradicted the intentions of the Caucasus administration. But in 1905 Vorontsov-Dashkov had to comply with the officials from the capital. At the same time, some responsibility for cruel suppression of the revolution was shifted from him in the eyes of local population.

The tendency to centralize and “russify” civil servants overshadowed the necessity to rationalize the cooperation between judicial authority and police in the Caucasus. This situation was not legally settled until the collapse of the Empire. Moreover, later on (by 1908) Petersburg officials enjoyed the support of nationalist deputies of the Duma in their efforts to extend the influence of the Council of Ministries in the matters in the Caucasus [Shavlokhova 2014, p. 88; Ismail-Zade 2008].

We can only partly agree with the conclusions that “renewed Russian administration was in need of an effective means of combating the *abrek* movement spreading in the region” [Urushadze 2015, p. 145]. This movement was generally of a local character, and started to be perceived as an important threat only after the first Russian revolution in the context of Pan-Islamism. According to the archive documents, it is possible to assert that both the viceroy and the Ministry of Internal affairs were far more concerned about the events in Transcaucasia, in major Russian centers in the North Caucasus and about the forthcoming election to the State Duma.

As far as the police was concerned, it also had to be supported. “The most loyal and devoted report” by the *namestnik* to Tsar Nicolas II from 22, April, 1905 characterized the state of affairs as extremely alarming. H. I. Vorontsov-Dashkov pointed out that “anti-government political propaganda” “over recent years had significantly increased and brought about a number of revolutionary and social-democratic movements in the province”. He wrote about the inadequacy of resources to curb the revolution. “For the whole vast territory of the Caucasus... with its almost 9-million population there have been established only six provincial gendarme departments comprising 32 officers and 139 sub-officers, two fortress gendarme troops (2 officers and 22 sub-officers), one in-

sufficiently equipped “guard department” (secret police) unit in Tiflis, two small investigation offices in Baku and Batumi and two gendarme police railway departments for the Transcaucasian and Vladikavkaz railway” [Ob ob’edinenii policejskoj dejatel’nosti na Kavkaze, l. 6].

To amass governmental forces the suggestion was issued to create two special offices: one to deal with paperwork, the other to supply domestic intelligence in the region. The agent net was supposed to be financed by no less than 100,000 rub. a year [Ob ob’edinenii policejskoj dejatel’nosti na Kavkaze, l. 6]. The report also indicated that financial support of such measures in the Caucasus was low in comparison with similar ones in the Warsaw governorate-general (320 667 Rub. against 433 794 Rub.) [Ob ob’edinenii policejskoj dejatel’nosti na Kavkaze, l. 7]. Revolutionary events in Baku demonstrated the low economic and social status of police officers, the shortage of modern weapons and well-trained staff.

The report was approved on 22 April 1905. Local senior police officers were vested with the authority of division commanders and with the right to apply to the governor-general for rewarding or promoting their subordinates even if “these subordinates didn’t meet the requirements of the existing rules concerning rewards” [Ob ob’edinenii policejskoj dejatel’nosti na Kavkaze, l. 9].

Upon the intercession of Vorontsov-Dashkov, lieutenant-general E. Y. Shirinkin was appointed by the imperial decree of 22 May 1905 to head the police in the Caucasus. The proposal to increase funding for the secret service by 100,000 Rubles was also approved. [Ob ob’edinenii policejskoj dejatel’nosti na Kavkaze, ll. 30–32]. A widespread statement that police officers were not well-paid is true to a certain degree. For example, the governor-general insisted that junior police officers (police inspectors in the Commissioner’s office) should be made equivalent to state civil servants and given rights similar to police officers of Moscow and Saint Petersburg (XIV grade of service class, IX grade of pension) [Pis’mo namestnika Ego Imperatorskogo Velichestva na Kavkaze..., l. 40 ob.].

As the revolutionary situation in the Caucasus developed, it became clear that all law-enforcement services had to be united under the command of the viceroy. In April, 1906 the suggestion was issued to revoke the post of the Police Commissioner in the Caucasus.

When the Duma convened, it was no longer possible to take immediate decisions. Nicolas II ordered everything should be done in accordance with the legislative procedure. The correspondence between the *namestnik* and the Council of Ministries and Stolypin concerning this matter lasted several months. Obviously, the government objected to the participation of the Duma deputies in considering this matter. The project “Provisional regulations concerning a Special police department at the Office of the *namestnik* of His Imperial Majesty in the Caucasus” itself didn’t undergo much editing. The necessity of preserving the pre-Duma legal framework in ruling Caucasus was supported by an experienced police general E. N. Shirinkin, who was personally in charge of the security of Nicolas II. In this matter he was generally in line with the suggestions made by Vorontsov-Dashkov in 1905. However, it remained unclear how to avoid the debate about the revolutionary movement in the Caucasus in the Duma.

The Council of Ministers successfully found a solution to the situation. Vorontsov-Dashkov implied in his proposals that it might be possible to downsize the record-keeping office. It was an appropriate reason. A document (a special journal of the Council of Ministers) dated 1 August 1906 “On merging civil and police administration

in the Caucasus” was approved by Nicolas II on 24 August 1906. The reform of the police force didn’t require any new expenditure. On the contrary, the economy amounted to 27,400 Rub. per year. The changes came down to “abolition of the post of the Police Commissioner in the Caucasus, vesting the governor-general with this authority, abolition of some posts in the former office of the Police Commissioner and incorporating the remaining positions into the office of the governor-general under the name of the special police department” [Ob ob’edinenii policejskoj dejatel’nosti na Kavkaze, l. 63]. It was concerned with the prerogatives of the Crown — staff reshuffles in the structures of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Thus, circumventing the State Duma the government managed to support Vorontsov-Dashkov’s policy and to concentrate the power in his hands to overwhelm the revolutionary movement in the Caucasus.

It should be noted that the special legal status of politically volatile Caucasus areas had been created before the arrival of Vorontsov-Dashkov. The “Increased security” regime was introduced in Tiflis and Baku with adjoining areas (approved on 29, June, 1901), Batumi (approved on 22, June, 1902), Elisabethpol, Kars, Nukha, Shusha, and Alexandropol (approved on 27, October, 1903), in counties of Akhaltsikhe, Akhalkalaki and Borchali in Tiflis governorate (guberniya) (approved on 26, February, 1904), in Kutaisi and counties of Kutaisi, Ozergeti and Novosenaki in Kutaisi governorate (approved on 13, February, 1905) and Erivan (approved on 18, March, 1905) [Ob ob’edinenii policejskoj dejatel’nosti na Kavkaze, l. 19].

One of the most serious struggles within The Caucasus Viceroyalty during the period of the first Russian revolution was the Armenian–Tatar (Armenian–Azerbaijani) conflict, whose acute phase started with the clashes in Baku on 6–9, February, 1905. Let us briefly outline them. The telegram sent to Saint Petersburg by governor-general wasn’t classified as secret, it just notified of the fact of “pogrom”. About 60 % of businesses was destroyed, “mostly Armenian” companies suffered, only large foreign and Russian companies survived. The material losses, according to Vorontsov-Dashkov, amounted to 25 million rubles. “Chernyj gorod” (Black city), except for the Armenian Caspian company, had survived, “about 4 million tons of oil had been burnt”. “The impetus for the pogrom came from the revolutionaries; the Tatars from the neighboring villages as well as evil workers of all possible nationalities, including Russians, took advantage of the disturbance”. Shooting among the inhabitants stopped, but “murdering with bladed weapons” continued. There was an attempt on the part of the governor-general at reconciliation with the help of the clergy and elected representatives from the conflicting sides, but mostly he pointed out the possibility of resorting to military units and taking steps to reorganize the police. “Seven newly-arrived battalions of the second brigade of 33th division were inspected, we expect the last battalion and artillery today; it has been ordered to strengthen the police force in the city and industries in accordance with the promise of the Minister of Finance to reimburse expenses; Armenian and Tatar police officers are being replaced with the Russian reserve officers of junior ranks; it has been ordered that the town governor’s office be established as well as to remove the Tatar villages that have always been of a criminal nature from industrial areas”. [Telegramma I.I. Voroncova-Dashkova — stats-sekretarju Je.Ju. Nol’de, ll. 1–1 ob., 2 (Polulist 1–2–3)].

Later on the oil-industry area in Baku and labor movement were also under the scrutiny of the Chairman of the Council of Ministers. Even at the beginning of 1907, the authorities feared another wave of unrest among workers and tried to eliminate any

possible causes for strike. They mostly were anxious about the possibility of ship workers in Baku going on strike. It might disrupt petroleum products delivery. P. A. Stolypin wrote to the governor-general that "such events threaten the whole of Russian industry with numberless calamities". The Prime Minister asked to "provide local administration, which is responsible for maintaining order, with any assistance so that they won't be taken by surprise and have sufficient military force on stand-by for immediate suppression of riots" [Perepiska s Sovetom ministrov ob armjano-tatarskih stolknovenijah..., l. 48]. The pogroms of 1905, still remembered in Baku, occurred due to the inability of the authorities to use the troops expediently.

In May 1905 riots spread to the Yerivan governorate, and in summer they swept across whole districts of Baku and Elizabethtopol governorates, as well as Tiflis. The acute stage of confrontation took place in 1905–1906. It is impossible to describe the above-mentioned events in detail within this article, so we refer the reader to specific studies [Sargent 2010].

It is worth mentioning that the first State Duma was unable to be actively involved in tackling the problem due to the brevity of its convocation. Another obstacle to their involvement in resolving the conflict was the special status of the governor-general protected by the decree "on the restoration of the post of the governor-general of the Caucasus" from 26 February 1905. A civil servant holding this position was subordinate to the Emperor [Zakonodatel'nye akty perehodnogo vremeni..., p. 32]. I. L. Goremykin, who became the Chairman of the Council of Ministers in 1906, systematically redirected inquiries from the Duma concerning the pogrom to the governor-general in the Caucasus. As the Chairman saw it, he was lacking the necessary data and had no authority to deal with the relatively undue activities of the administration in Transcaucasia which might spark the development of Armenian-Tatar conflict in the region (from 13–15 June, 1906, № 337). These matters were within the competence of the governor-general. Goremykin wrote that "according to the existing legislation the position and power of the governor-general are not under ministerial control" [Perepiska s Sovetom ministrov ob armjano-tatarskih stolknovenijah..., l. 29 ob.]. However, Vorontsov-Dashkov himself was willing to cooperate constructively with the public of Transcaucasia, and later with the first Russian Parliament [Vorontsov-Dashkov 1907, p. 4].

The First State Duma's interest in the Armenian–Azerbaijani conflict was determined at least by the fact that representatives of both sides were among its members. Elizabethtopol (modern-day Ganja) governorate was represented by two Armenian and two Muslim deputies; Yerivan governorate by two Armenian deputies and one Muslim, Baku governorate by two Muslim deputies, the city of Baku by one Muslim. [Vybornye proizvodstva... 3 otdel. Po Bakinskoj gubernii, ll. 1–3; Vybornye proizvodstva... 9 otdel. Po Elisavetpol'skoj gubernii, ll. 2–3; Vybornye proizvodstva... 9 otdel. Po Kutaisskoj gubernii, ll. 2–3]. Moreover, a number of representatives (not only of Armenian or Azerbaijani origin) had already had experience in taking part in the actions organized by the authorities to alleviate the conflict.

Before anyone else, it was most probably the editor-in-chief of the influential newspaper "Caspij" and member of the Committee on reconciliation between Armenians and Muslims, the "Azerbaijani" A. M. Topchubashov, who initiated intense political activity. Even in March, 1905 he headed a group of intellectuals in Baku who adopted "The declaration of Muslims' needs" which was supposed to be handed over to the author of the project of the Imperial Duma A. G. Bulygin. In April 1905, being in the delegation from

the Duma of Baku, A. M. Topchubashov arrived in Saint Petersburg where he had an audience with Bulygin and with Vorontsov-Dashkov and voiced the proposals stated in the "Declaration" [Sejdzade 1991, pp. 8–11]. Probably, the governor-general's permission to issue a newspaper "The Hayat" in the Azerbaijani language was a gesture of recognition. At the same time, A. M. Topchubashov took part in creating a prototype of the Muslim fraction on the Duma, the "Ittifaq al-Muslimin" [Gasanly 2013, pp. 141–142; Usmanova 2005, p. 134].

The next meeting of the actual leader of Transcaucasian Muslims took place in the second decade of June. A. M. Topchubashov defended Muslims against the background of a new stage of confrontation (so called Yerevan events) but also "counterattacked", accusing the press of condemning the Azeri and covering up the actions of Armenian insurgents. It is of interest that despite the seriousness of the conflict, the Muslim representative in his speech mainly focused on the requests for organizing national educational institutions (which were generally well-received by H. I. Vorontsov-Dashkov) [Gasanly 2013, p. 143].

During the spring-summer of 1905 a Senate inspection to investigate the causes of February massacre and its culprits was carried out in Baku. According to the report by a senator A. M. Kuzminsky [Kuzminsky 1906], both sides of the conflict were consolidated and willing to cooperate to shift the responsibility for fueling the conflict to local authorities, which, in fact, played the role of extras. The Muslim side presented the same materials, which had been given to the viceroy the week previous [Gasanly 2013, p. 143]. On the whole, as it is stated in "The report on the governance of the Caucasus". Vorontsov-Dashkov gradually took the Azerbaijani side. He considered the activity of the Armenian terrorist organization "Dashnaktsutyun" to be a key factor in the escalation of the conflict [Vorontsov-Dashkov 1907, pp. 8–17]. In autumn 1905 the situation in Baku was aggravated. The confrontation spread across the whole of Absheron and took an economic form: up to half of the oil derricks were destroyed, the output of oil declined by one third in comparison with the previous year [Rustamova 2013, p. 173, 175]. Given the circumstances, the opposing forces chose different strategies for dialogue with the authorities. The Azerbaijani continued their cooperation with the viceroy and won over the Russian population of Baku as well as the Russian press. Oil magnates on behalf of the Armenian side appealed to the Council of Ministers for total eviction of "the Tatars" from the settlements located in proximity to the oil production enterprises [Gasanly 2013, pp. 144–145]. The resolution in favor of any party was suspended by the Manifesto of 17 October and the escalation of the revolution.

After the manifesto of 6 August 1905 (the Bulyginskaya Duma) and 17 October 1905, petitions were addressed to the viceroy from Ekaterinodar and Novorossiysk, while in Saint Petersburg there was a special council concerning the application of the Duma electoral legislation to the Caucasus. D. M. Solsky became the Chairman of the council, which was comprised of civil servants being representatives of Caucasian nobility: the jägermeister Prince D. Melikov, chamberlain Prince N. Argytinsky-Dolgorukov, the chairman of the Caucasian archeological commission E. Veidenbaum. Other members included: a civil servant for special missions of the governor-general Aselder-bek Kazanalipov, the major of Poti N. Nikoladze, a member of the City council of Batumi G. Zhuryli. Prince I. Chavchavadze, former chairman of Board of Nobles's Land Bank of Tiflis and publisher of the newspaper "Iveria", was included by special request of the governor-general [Sovet ministrov po namestnichestvu na Kavkaze..., ll. 108, 115–115 ob.].

Rumors about preparing a new “Electoral regulation” circulated and prompted some discussions among executives of Transcaucasia. On 21, January, 1906 acting governor of Tiflis Prince Cherkezov sent a telegram to E. Y. Nolde about the necessity of drawing up electoral registers. In response to his telegram Nolde replied that the detailed information from Saint Petersburg would be delivered to Tiflis personally by a member of a special council E. Veidenbaum [Sovet ministrov po namestnichestvu na Kavkaze, l. 118].

What was the proposed election procedure like during the preparation for the campaign in the Caucasus in 1906? It was subject to terms set out in the document entitled “On the application of the Duma electoral legislation to the Caucasus”, whose projects were considered both in the office of the viceroy and Saint Petersburg. These documents bear signs of numerous hand-written comments and editing. There were some significant departures from “general principles” as far as the election procedure was concerned. Two electoral assemblies were formed in Terek and Kuban constituencies. The first one consisted of electors representing Cossacks while the second one of electors representing the rest of the population. Elections in the North Caucasus in the constituencies of Avar, Andi, Gunib, Dargin, Kazikumukh and Samur constituencies were supposed to be held as conventions of authorized representatives of village communities. The Black Sea Governorate, Batumi and Suhimi districts made up one constituency with its centre in Batumi. [Sovet ministrov po namestnichestvu na Kavkaze..., ll. 123–123 ob.]. This might have been done with a view to increasing Russian representation during the election. The military governor of the Batumi district was put in charge of supervision of the electoral campaign. The *namestnik* had the right to appoint local persons to head electoral commissions if there were no district marshals of nobility or arbitrators. However, police officers and those who were involved in drawing electoral registers could not be appointed. [Sovet ministrov po namestnichestvu na Kavkaze..., l. 126].

While designing the statute on election by law of 6, August, 1905 the authorities hoped to rely upon large landholders. At the same time, they were apprehensive of the Georgian nobility’s nationalism. According to the Ministry of Internal affairs, “landlords in the Caucasus were in a more favorable position in comparison with land owners even in southern governorates”. It was necessary not to base representation upon the value of the estate and the harvest rate, but upon the increased number of desyatina (instead of 135, as proposed by the governor-general, the minister’s project stated 200). Terek and Kuban districts were in a special situation as there were a large number of Cossacks’ lands exempt from district taxes, and their landlords were of Russian origin. In their case the state land-tax was applied, which was also relatively high at 50 Rubles. To compare: in the governor-general’s proposals this norm was 70 Rubles of district levy [Sovet ministrov po namestnichestvu na Kavkaze..., ll. 4–4 ob.].

Final projects supposed significant reduction in the qualification: up to 15 Rubles of district tax for governorates and districts of Transcaucasia and to 3 Rubles 30 copecks of state land-tax for Terek and Kuban districts. It was the third attempt at introducing adequate norms of qualification. A little earlier the governor-general had suggested “30 Rubles of district tax for governorates and districts of Transcaucasia and 6 Rubles 60 copecks of state land-tax for Terek and Kuban districts”. A reduced qualification had to ensure the turnout of voters. In the context of the revolution an election failure was disadvantageous for the authorities. One of the variants of the document read, with reference to representatives of the Special Council: “Georgian nobility rarely and reluctantly makes use of

the right of collective voting at the assemblies of nobility (and sends representatives)". It was proposed to allow all landlords to participate in preliminary conventions since "those whose district tax is a little less than 30 Rubles are bound to consider themselves deprived at the election". [Sovet ministrov po namestnichestvu na Kavkaze..., ll. 127–128]. Georgian nobles appealed to decrease the qualification. This measure was provided for in the Project concerning introducing district institutions in Transcaucasia; however, for a large number of landowners such replacement of direct participation in the election was unlikely to satisfy their political ambitions [Sovet ministrov po namestnichestvu na Kavkaze..., l. 132]. The authorities were forced to seek support of regional nobility; nevertheless, it was not a mistake.

The document specified the electoral procedure for Elithabethpol and Yerivan governorates. The former one was inhabited by 872,000 people: 292,000 of Armenian origin, 534,000 "Tatars"; the population of the latter one was 819,000 people: 441,000 of Armenian origin, 313,000 "Tatars". The viceroy was recommended to "combine villages in electoral districts as he thinks fit in accordance with ethnic composition of the population, even if in alternate strips", and to divide each electoral convention into two parts "determined in advance (here it is crossed out and the conjunction "and" is inserted (author's note)) the number of members of the State Duma to be elected from each part" [Sovet ministrov po namestnichestvu na Kavkaze..., l. 128].

The authorities in the Caucasus had to resort to democracy and involve *inorodtsy* (non-Russians) in the election given the revolution and national unrest. At the same time new conflicts caused by Armenian-Azerbaijani hostility were anticipated "especially in those governorates where neither prevails". Nonetheless, the administration in the Caucasus advised holding elections in such regions. They justly believed that "participation in all-Russian representative institutions might have a positive impact on their outlook and relieve mutual enmity among the indigenous population of Transcaucasia". "As a precaution, it wouldn't be inappropriate to separate Muslims from Armenians during the elections as... Cossacks and the indigenous (non-military) population in Kuban and Terek districts are separated". According to authorities, "conventions of city dwellers as well as district land owners due to their civility and cultivation and small numbers are unlikely to provoke any clashes between nationalities" [Sovet ministrov po namestnichestvu na Kavkaze..., ll. 128–129].

One of the brightest initiatives by the regional authorities to ease tension between Armenians and Azerbaijani was organizing the "conciliatory" convention in Tiflis proposed by the governor-general (20 February — 6 March 1906). Its composition was more than representative: there were all members of the governor-general's Council, governors, representatives from Armenian and Azerbaijanian sides, clergy, all leading newspapers of Transcaucasia [Sejidzade 1991, pp. 17–22; Ismail-Zade 2008, pp. 76–77]. It should be noted, though, that representativeness of the convention and the loyalty of most deputies to the authorities resulted in the final declaration containing only a range of liberal political demands: introduction of free general primary education in native languages, trials by jury, equality under the law etc.

Among "practical" measures there was a suggestion for creating a special *namestnik's* council of voters from the population. It was approved by Vorontsov-Dashkov [Sejidzade 1991, pp. 21–22]. However, upon the end of the convention its participants were involved in a new political battle for the right to be elected to the All-Russian Duma, a typical de-

mand of the revolutionary period. In the first Duma representatives of conflicting sides, not surprisingly, found themselves within the same fraction of Kadets. At the same time Muslims from Transcaucasia coordinated their actions with other Muslim deputies within the above-mentioned "Ittifaq al-Musulimin" [Topchubashev 1907, pp. 25–26].

The Armenian-Azerbaijani issue was debated in the State Duma (by the Commission of "thirty three") on 6 June and 12 June 1905 [Gosudarstvennaja Duma: Stenograficheskie otchety. Sessija Pervaja. T. II, pp. 1227–1241; Po povodu stolknovenija tatar s armjanami v Jerivanskoj i Elisavetpol'skoj gubernijah...]. Representatives of the region of Armenian origin (H. I. Bagaturov, K. M. Ter-Petrosyants) and of Muslim origin (I. Ziyatchanov) as well as a speaker from the Kadets' commission K. K. Chernosvitov outlined the causes and the development of the Armenian-Muslim conflict. All orators voiced a consolidated opinion (that of the Kadets) accusing the regional authorities of incompetence, inaction and provocations of the massacre. In fact, they presented two quite vague demands: to take steps to resolve the conflict and to make "persons and authorities" accountable for it [Gosudarstvennaja Duma: Stenograficheskie otchety. Sessija Pervaja. T. II, p. 1228]. Additionally, they criticized the concepts of Russification and colonization of the Caucasus.

According to the shorthand records, the most radical orator of 12, June, 1906 became a representative from Kutaisi governorate, the Georgian social-democrat I. I. Ramishvili. He had already acted as a mediator between the conflicting sides. His speech, replete with Marxist rhetoric, contained, however, an essential statement that the population "still, probably, ... suffers from well-known nationalism". Unfortunately, I. I. Ramishvili concluded his speech not with suggestions for de-escalating the conflict but with appeals to bring down "the abhorrent regime" [Gosudarstvennaja Duma: Stenograficheskie otchety. Sessija Pervaja. T. II, pp. 1237–1239].

Within the Second Duma (20 February 1907–2 June 1907) the Caucasus deputies kept on promoting protest actions. The well-known "Zurabov incident" (16–17 April) has been comprehensively examined in memoirs and special studies [Gosudarstvennaja Duma: Stenograficheskie otchety. Sessija Vtoraja. T. I, Stb. 57–68; Zurabov 1908, pp. 48–50; Golovin 1926, pp. 140–144 etc.]. This particular event has been mostly considered as an occasion for the dissolution of the Second Duma though even the imperial officers regarded this as secondary [Shvanebah 2008, p. 104–105]. For the issue it is critical to underscore that the controversial speech of Russian army was delivered by the Tiflis representative A. G. Zurabov who for two years had been in military service [Bojovich 1907, p. 472]. His address was no improvisation. Though not touching on the Caucasus itself, it reflected hatred to the imperial military system on the part of the social-democrats of Transcaucasia. And it must be taken into account that Zurabov was the military case manager in the Social-Democratic faction. The latter considered the 'old' armed forces as the main instrument of the suppression of the revolution.

As we see it, the results of the activities of civil society of Transcaucasia and its representatives in the First and the Second State Duma in solving real problems (for example the Armenian-Azerbaijani confrontation) could only be regarded as negative. In the context of a sharp rise of nationalism, reinforced by archaic local and kin aspects, representatives of the opposing sides were unable to extend possibilities of cooperation with local, regional and imperial administrations. At the level of local authorities it manifested itself in their mutual accusations and a massive campaign for preempting investigation

(first and foremost, by creating “information noise”). At the same time, in the dialogue with the viceroy of the Caucasus and in their speeches in the Parliament, Armenians and Azerbaijani chose to be in line with All-Russian liberal mood. They focused on accusing civil servants of incompetence and corruption, and demands for autonomous educational space of the country and establishing “responsible” municipal and central institutions. Thus, the dialogue with the executive structures of the Empire concerning the issue of ensuring security, which in the short-run embodied the essence of the conflict, was made impossible.

In spite of the problems described above, Vorontsov-Dashkov always supported securing the representativity of the Caucasus in the State Duma [Djakin 1998, p. 488]. What was more important, he expressed his view to Nicolas II personally during the course of creating a new election law in 1907. Perhaps the opinion of the *namestnik* (who was obviously highly regarded by the emperor) defined the tsar’s position highlighted by the head creator of the project of the reform S. E. Kryzhanovsky: “The Sovereign expressed the will which was confirmed by him in 1907 not to deprive of the right of the vote to those strata of the population which had already been given this right” [Kokovtsov, Vladimir Nikolaevich to Sergei Efimovich Kryzhanovskii 1929, l. 1]. This meant that both the monarch and Vorontsov-Dashkov were not those who intended to change their solutions on the spur of the moment.

On top of all of this, some scholars believe that the *namestnik* disputed dividing into the national electoral curiae as well. So he had to give a special ‘elucidation’ to the law informing that the ‘Russian’ curia covers every person not of local origin who confesses Orthodox, Old Belief or Lutheran faith including Germans, Estonians, Latvians, Czechs, Orthodox Poles and Greeks [Ismail-Zade 2008, pp. 82–83].

But by the end of 1907 the number of the regional representatives was scaled back to ten with one deputy from the Russian curia and two from the Cossacks. The governorates of Baku, Elisabethpol and Yerivan were granted only two mandates (one for Muslims and one for Non-Muslims) [Ismail-Zade 2008, p. 82]. Thus, thanks to Vorontsov-Dashkov and Nicolas II’s consistent stand, the representativity of the Caucasus in the Third Duma was secured but narrowed down. In our opinion this twofold position of the Supreme power was determined and at the same time gave rise to anti-Georgian and anti-Armenian actions by the far Right who used the Duma area to bring up the ‘Caucasian issue’. Furthermore the situation was relevant to Stolypin’s efforts of gathering support from the conservative members of the Duma and the State Council.

Finally, it was the *namestnik* who took it upon himself to introduce real measures to settle national differences in the region and to advocate for the rights of the Caucasian communities before the Centre.

Between 1905 and 1906 Vorontsov-Dashkov gradually restored the dented trust in authorities on the part of Armenian population in terms of religious affairs.

For a long time the opposition in Armenia was not active. “In accordance with the policy of Russification, the commander-in-chief in the Caucasus general A. M. Dondukov-Korsakov implemented the following steps: in schools the Russian language became prevailing and replaced the national Armenian language, Armenian Church started to be repressed. At the end of the 19th century revolutionary emigré communities from the Caucasus appeared in Western Europe and the first Caucasian political parties emerged” [Karnaukh 2013, p. 45]. In 1903, the head of the Caucasian administration G. S. Golitsyn confiscated the property of the Armenian Church. This odious act was annulled by Vo-

rontsov-Dashkov, to the apparent considerable dissatisfaction of the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

A secret letter from P. A. Stolypin dated December 1906 to the viceroy in the Caucasus sheds light on the complaints against the Armenian Church. The Department of Religious Affairs and non-orthodox confessions of the Ministry of Internal Affairs disapproved of the nationalistic policy of the Armenian Church. The clergy was accused of colluding with the nationalistic organization “Dashnaksutyun”, the violation of clerical ethics (circumventing the Patriarch) and of the procedure of appointing members of the Synod (Etchmiadzin). It is clear that disapproval was implicitly addressed to the viceroy in the Caucasus, Count Vorontsov-Dashkov, through whose office the petition for the appointment of new members should have gone. The letter stated: “Obviously Patriarch-Catholicos Mkrtich has fallen under the influence of supporters of the Armenian revolutionary parties in his circle who took control of the affairs of the Patriarchate of Etchmiadzin and the Patriarch himself, and he cannot oppose the realization of their projects within the above-mentioned Church” [Perepiska s Sovetom ministrov ob armjano-tatarskih stolknovenijah..., l. 41].

The attempt to hold a convention of the representatives of the Armenian people in Etchmiadzin in 1905 caused enormous displeasure. The viceroy had already sent a report concerning this issue to the Ministry of the Internal Affairs in October, 1905. The potential candidates for the members of the Synod (Sirakan Tigranyan and archimandrite Mesrop) put forward by the Patriarch were perceived as “extreme” social-democrats by the Ministry. “The Etchmiadzin Academy had long turned into the arena of propaganda, storage of weapons and illegal literature, with strangers and local agitators constantly residing within this institution” [Perepiska s Sovetom ministrov ob armjano-tatarskih stolknovenijah..., l. 41].

Other Armenian-Gregorian dioceses came into criticism as well. In Astrakhan diocese new primary classes were opened that prepared for entering a non-existent theological seminary, later a new school for girls was opened. The Spiritual Consistory in defense of its actions referred to the Imperial Edict from 1 August 1905 regarding the restoration of the confiscated property to the Armenian Church. The logic of the civil servants from the capital was clear. The Church encouraged revolutionary movement, interfered in the prerogatives of the government and, most importantly, stimulated the development of national education. Blatant fault-finding with the church policy can be found in the text of the official letter from the Minister to the governor-general. For example, students of Armenian religious seminary in Nakhichevan-on-Don (now part of Rostov-on-Don) demanded that “one student of the 4th class, who had been expelled for making a speech in church during the funeral of his fellow student in which he mainly raised a question of the harm of living in a boarding school to seminarians, be admitted again” [Perepiska s Sovetom ministrov ob armjano-tatarskih stolknovenijah..., l. 42]. If such incidents drew the attention of the minister, it's no wonder that Vorontsov-Dashkov had a negative perception Stolypin's policy towards the Caucasus.

“The circumstances described above clearly show Patriarch-Catholicos Mkrtich's unsuitability for a high position of the head of the Armenian-Gregorian Church at present and his inability to govern it in accordance with the law”. It was also mentioned in the letter that “taking any exceptional measures with regard to the Catholicos is currently extremely undesirable” [Perepiska s Sovetom ministrov ob armjano-tatarskih stolknovenijah..., l. 42].

venijah, l. 42]. However, P. A. Stolypin believed that the government had to demonstrate firmness. "In the first place it's necessary to recommend Patriarch-Catholicos Mkrtich, on account of his sick condition and old age, to retire, allowing him to reside in Etchmiadzin monastery, and to provide him with an adequate pension but on condition of his total exclusion from any affairs"

Ad interim the Church was supposed to be headed by the Synod., P. A. Stolypin suggested introducing a new regulation concerning the Armenian-Gregorian church. This had to be modelled "in accordance with regulations on governing other Churches without giving the exceptional independence which it now enjoys against the interest of the state" [Perepiska s Sovetom ministrov ob armjano-tatarskih stolknovenijah..., l. 43]. The clergy disloyal to the authorities were to be removed from the Patriarch's circle. The Minister urged the governor-general to notify him of any changes which had occurred in the composition of the Synod over the last two years.

The reply was sent a month later: 29 January 1907. Vorontsov-Dashkov wrote: "It is unlikely to expect the Patriarch to retire himself, and I do not know whether such is permissible according to the canons of the Armenian-Gregorian Church". The fact that Etchmiadzin Synod governed ecclesiastical matters contradicted Russian legislation. "The Patriarch has the full cooperation of the Etchmiadzin Synod; however, never will the Patriarch give up the prerogatives of his rank, neither to the Synod, or to any other institution, nor to a representative of the state" [Perepiska s Sovetom ministrov ob armjano-tatarskih stolknovenijah..., ll. 44–44 ob.]

The *namestnik* considered it impossible to put pressure on the head of the Armenian Church. The Catholicos was 90 years old. He had been Patriarch since 1893 and enjoyed an immense popularity among Armenians. He embodied the religious and national unity for the worshippers. "If confiscating church and school properties some time ago revolutionized the Armenian people, who had not been interested in politics before, and who are only now returning to their prior normal state, it is unrealistic not to envisage a surge of public outcry in the case of exerting any coercion on the head of the Armenian church", wrote viceroy Vorontsov-Dashkov. He did not want to stir up the moderate sections of Armenian society. He stated: "Not denying the existence in Etchmiadzin of some persons belonging to the revolutionary party who influence the elderly Patriarch, I can't but admit a certain extent of loyalty in Catholicos Mkrtich himself" [Perepiska s Sovetom ministrov ob armjano-tatarskih stolknovenijah..., ll. 44 ob. — 45].

The patriarch thanked the governor-general who brought the all-Armenian convention in Etchmiadzin to an end. In his kontakion, the Patriarch suspended the creation of a new Armenian settlement with the assistance of foreign subjects of Armenian origin. The governor-general might have been critical of the reform of the Armenian-Gregorian church. He asked Stolypin to give proposals concerning these matters, which had been handed over to Saint Petersburg by the former commander of civil administration in the Caucasus in December 1903, back to the local administration for further debate.

The *namestnik's* views on the issue of emancipation of Muslim population in the Caucasus were no less "liberal". In 1906 a meeting of the Muslim representatives of Kuban and Terek districts was held where a document about establishing an independent community administration of Muslims in Northern Caucasus was drawn up. The relatively loyal behaviour of Muslim officials and fears of a rise of Islamism forced the government to make concessions to the local élite. In 1913 an institute of conciliators appointed by a military

governor from among Russian civil servants and local landlords was initiated in Dagestan. [Khlynina, Urushadze 2011, p. 97].

The orthodox clergy in Georgia, as well as the nobility, by and large preferred to cooperate with authorities, submitting petitions and proposals to change the situation. For example, a general request of representatives of the Georgian clergy for restoration of autocephaly seemed to be quite moderate, though one of the petitions contained threats to make a Church union with the Pope in default [Volhonskij etc. 2013, p. 156]. Nikolas the Exarch of Georgia wrote with regards to the petition of all bishops, except for the bishop of Sukhumi, about "the monarch's granting autocephaly to the Church of Georgia": "I humbly petition to come to Saint Petersburg and report this crucial matter personally" [Osnoshenijah s raznymi mestami i licami, l. 5]. It is doubtful that the authorities would have agreed to implement the reform given the absence of the independence of the Russian Orthodox Church. There was no reply to the letter...

On the whole, we fully agree with the statement that the "vicerealty became a regional embodiment of strong centralized power having large prerogatives but at the same time...being close to the governed territories and, therefore, more pragmatic and flexible" [Agasbekova 2011, p. 11]. After the convocation of the first State Duma, deputies directed a barrage of criticism at the Council of Ministers. From 15 June to 23 June 1906 there followed inquiries from the Duma, unpleasant to the authorities, about the trial by court martial in Tiflis of 27 soldiers from the Mingrel regiment; about sending a punitive expedition to Svanetia; about an anticipated pogrom in Batumi; about unlawful arrest without charge [Perepiska s Sovetom ministrov ob armjano-tatarskih stolknovenijah..., l. 29].

Inquiries were initiated by deputies on the basis of information sent from the local areas, and addressed to both I. L. Goremykin and specialized ministers, namely the Minister of War and Minister of Justice. As far as inquiries about dispatching troops to Svanetia and a threat of pogroms in Batumi were concerned, the Duma received no response from the government.

New principles of the regional policy were developed by the Committee of Ministers on the basis of the decree from December 12, 1904. Under the pressure of the revolution Nicolas II agreed to administrative de-centralization. We can suggest several reasons for his decision: his personal trust in Vorontsov-Dashkov, weakening positions in central structures and uncoordinated actions of ministers in the fight against revolution in the Caucasus.

The program of "pacification" of the Caucasus through the liberal administrative and political reforms associated with the name of Vorontsov-Dashkov proved to be successful in the long run. However, his hyper-independent policy resulted in multiple conflicts with civil servants in Saint Petersburg and the State Duma. These struggles hindered the implementation of the changes during the first Russian revolution. A personal factor is also worth taking into account: Vorontsov-Dashkov had awkward dealings with some members of the government, especially with P. A. Stolypin who came to the fore after 1906. In our opinion, local élites of the region (first of all, of Transcaucasia) contributed much to the incomplete character of the reforms. Georgian, Armenian and Azerbaijani political representatives, having quite wide-scale and radical programs of reforms (due to the standards of the passive authorities of the Empire) tried to gain maximum capitulations from the government in the shortest possible time, demonstrating explicit and implicit support of revolutionary circles (Georgian social-democrats demonstrated the most aggressive be-

havior). At the same time the imperial administration's overriding demand for the restoration of minimally safe conditions was more or less ignored by the public. Thus, political activists, who had later become Caucasian deputies of the State Duma, fell between two camps. Revolutionaries were ready to support them as long as their voluntary defenders blocked the security actions of central authorities. The imperial authorities, in their turn, were willing to cooperate upon condition their prerogatives were not questioned. Having chosen the language of slogans and massive pressure on Tsarist administration, the delegates eliminated the possibility of satisfying their voters' expectations. At the same time they deliberately played the roles of background actors in settling regional conflicts without overcoming a set of local identities and positivistic approach.

In conclusion, the viceroyalty was the most effective institution against the background of the First Russian revolution though it remained an interim and emergency structure. Only H. I. Vorontsov-Dashkov had enough prerogatives and the subtle understanding of the situation. However, the limitations embedded within its essence eliminated the possibility of the drastic resolution of the problems, many of which still torment the Caucasus.

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